

PRACTITIONER'S CONFERENCES—Held at The New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center—Volume 6—Edited by Claude E. Forkner, M.D., F.A.C.P., Professor of Clinical Medicine, Cornell University Medical College. Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1957. 378 pages, \$6.75.

This is the 6th volume of an eminently successful series of general conferences on a wide variety of subjects. The current volume is an excellent one and includes among its diverse subjects, five chapters on tumors and a very provocative one on "Should patients be told the truth about serious illness?" The presentations are clear, authoritative, have a pertinent bibliography at the end of each conference as well as a summary by Dr. Forkner of the major points brought up in the discussion.

The practical aspects as well as some of the technical concepts are summarized and often unpublished material is presented.

This volume is one of the best of a series and general physicians will profit from reading it. The conferences are specifically oriented toward physicians who are not members of a University Medical Center, but such a person will profit considerably from reading chapters dealing with diseases not in his own field.

* * *

THE EARLY DETECTION AND PREVENTION OF DISEASE—Edited by John P. Hubbard, M.D., George S. Pepper, Professor of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. The Blakiston Division, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1957. 350 pages, \$7.50.

With some reluctance and hesitation, the American College of Physicians was led to devote one of its regular post-graduate courses to "The Early Detection and Prevention of Disease." It turned out to be popular and widely appreciated. This book is a selection from the informal discussions therein presented.

Dr. Hubbard gives particular credit for planning the course to the inspiration of Dr. Norbert J. Roberts, whose chapter on periodic health-maintenance examinations is an outstanding résumé of the methods and results of this procedure, for which there is increasing demand. He documents the discovery of unsuspected disease among a quarter to a third of those examined, and of untreated (though previously known) disease in an equal proportion. Physical and laboratory examinations are more fruitful than the history in this work. He emphasizes the necessity of adequate discussion of the findings with the patient and follow-up to see that recommendations are given attention. His discussion of the relative efficiencies of various laboratory procedures and the criteria for selecting those best applied in differing circumstances is highly valuable.

Other outstanding contributions from Paul White on cardiovascular disease, Thomas Almy on gastrointestinal disease, Henry Bockus on malignant neoplasms, Katharine Boucot on lung cancer, and Hubbard on rheumatic fever, are of nearly equal thoroughness and persuasiveness, and make the book well worth having. Frederick Liebolt gives a straightforward description of the technique of examining the musculoskeletal system, which, if not inspiring, is highly practical. Those who learn to follow his methods will do better work with little increased effort. Some twenty others, mostly Philadelphians, cover a wide variety of topics.

In an opening chapter, Lemuel McGee says that much of the current practice of internists is in the field of preventive medicine, but suggests that both the quantity and quality can be greatly improved. He blames the lack of more effective application of preventive principles upon the unreadiness of the public to purchase such service and (quoting Vines) upon the divorcement of preventive from clinical medicine and its forced marriage to public health. While

one may not agree with his reasons, the implied conclusion is acceptable: Clinicians should prepare themselves for the early detection of deviations from health and for instruction of their patients in dietary and other measures for health maintenance. This calls for thoroughness in examinations and skill in interpreting their findings and explaining appropriate action to be taken. This book is the best available explanation of how these things can be done. It expresses both the theory of disease prevention and practical methods by which it can be accomplished by practicing physicians.

RODNEY R. BEARD, M.D.

* * *

PROGRESS IN GYNECOLOGY—Volume III—Edited by Joe V. Meigs, M.D., Clinical Professor of Gynecology, Harvard Medical School; and Somers H. Sturgis, M.D., Clinical Professor of Gynecology, Harvard Medical School. Grune & Stratton, New York, 1957. 780 pages, \$15.50.

The third volume of the Progress in Gynecology, edited by Meigs and Sturgis, recently has been presented to the medical profession by Grune and Stratton of New York and London. As in the two previous issues the subject matter has been grouped under ten headings, namely Growth and Physiology, Diagnostic Methods, Functional Disorders, Interrelationships of Endocrine Glands, Sterility and Reproduction, Infections, Benign Growths, Malignant Growths, Operative Techniques, and Pre and Postoperative Care. A total of fifty-five subjects is here discussed in adequate detail to serve as a reliable and quick reference for the busy practitioner. Not all of the material is new but it has been re-evaluated in line with advancing knowledge and therefore is important. There has been added, however, considerable new material to complement subjects discussed in previous issues of the Progress. In order to avoid repetition the editors have selected an entirely new group of contributors, among them several renowned foreign gynecologists. Not every opinion expressed necessarily conforms with those held by others of equal experience which is refreshing and stimulating.

The fifty-five subjects range from such a relatively new subject as ovarian cortical stromal hyperplasia and its relation to estrogen production past the menopause to the techniques of urinary diversion into the intestinal tract in the presence of blocking carcinoma of the pelvic outlets. It would go too far to discuss the intervening subject matter but the reader will be well rewarded by perusing such problems as the applicability and techniques of the several forms of irradiation for pelvic cancer and the advantages and disadvantages of preoperative irradiation. Where the physics of irradiation are mentioned the average reader will find no difficulty in interpreting them into clinical values. Among the more controversial subjects the mechanism of pelvic pain, the so-called Stein-Leventhal syndrome and the psychosomatic disturbances manifesting themselves as pelvic dysfunction disorders are discussed without prejudice or dogma which gives the reader ample chance to compare opinions and come to an independent conclusion.

As might be expected there is considerable discussion of the diagnosis and treatment of the earliest states of pelvic cancer. Also here, ample chance is found to compare opinions regarding methods of treatment. The same holds true of the study and correction of infertility. Endocrine disorders and their manifestations in the generative organs have received adequate attention although these chapters add little to our current knowledge. All in all, the third volume of the Progress in Gynecology is an excellent computation of advancing thought on matters gynecologic and can be highly recommended as interesting reading matter.

Grune and Stratton present the book to the profession attractively bound, printed on good paper in clear type and well illustrated.

LUDWIG A. EMGE, M.D.